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20 December 1967

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Approved For Release 2003/04/18 : CIA-RDP79T00975A010600170001-5

Approved For Release 2003/04/18 : CIA-RDP79T00975A010600170001-5

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Czechoslovakia: The recently intensified party crisis may come to a head at a central committee meeting this week.

There has been ample evidence in recent months that the political situation was becoming critical.

The US Embassy believes that the most rancorous divisions are on economic issues, but that many other grave problems have also added to strife in the leadership. A Prague Foreign Ministry official has suggested, however, that there will be no basic policy changes, but instead an accommodation of views. In the past this sort of inconclusive compromise has enabled the regime to muddle through.

The central committee meeting was originally set for 13 December, but postponed until this week. The postponement, following Brezhnev's sudden visit to Prague on 8-9 December, has led to speculation concerning possible high-level personnel changes affecting even party boss Novotny.

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Congo (Kinshasa): The fate of Schramme's mercenaries in Rwanda is still uncertain, despite much discussion at the recent African leaders' conference in Uganda. Agreement reportedly was reached to return the mercenaries to the Congo no later than 19 December to stand trial, but Rwandan President Kayibanda apparently had not concurred. Mobutu and Kayibanda are scheduled to continue discussions today in Tanzania. Congolese patience, however, appears to be running thin, and if there are no results soon, Mobutu may try to take matters into his own hands.

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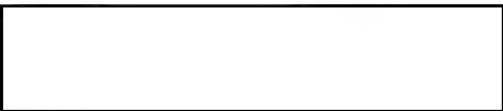
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